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A MODERN SOLILOQUY

WILBUR ROSS



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There is a Canadian minister, who, seeing the need of a more indly intercourse between his people and the strangers who attend his church, has inaugurated a new departure. After the regular Sunday evening services, he is holding—in the Sunday School-room below—a social, at which is intermingled singing, reading and light refreshments. It is bringing into more close intercourse the

strangers and members than years of cold coming and going in the regular way would do.

The minister, no doubt, had in mind the St. George's Episcopal Church, in New York, where the Rev. Dr. Rainsford, in various features, has done more real good than any half score of other ministers in the city. True, his ways have not been conventional, and to this very fact the Doctor attributes his great success in bringing thousands to St. George's who never would have come, or who possibly would never have attended any church.

As in the case of Dr. Rainsford's efforts, this Canadian minister is being opposed by two classes of his membership. Some of the deacons, who should have lived in the days of Puritan reign, when men and women were whipped and burned at the stake for having views not in accord with theirs—oppose the Social. They are saying all manner of things against their good minister. They walk the floor at night and talk to themselves, but on Monday, no one has yet discovered that they are any more honest in their dealings with the world. They do not object to the singing and prayers, but the awful sin of coffee and cake and social intercourse with the wicked stranger on Sunday night!

Ah, that is the cause of their crying out at the good man!

The other class are those good souls who will give their dollars to save the heathen—at a distance—but who will have nothing to

do with those people in their church whom they look upon as below *their* social standard. They come and go—attending strictly to all the little forms of man-made creed, but are utterly devoid of all those sweet Christian qualities that make for real good—people, they are, who look upon a church as a club, rather than a house of worship.

The lines following are not given for merit of composition, but for the facts they contain. It may be a long, long time before the "dream" turns to facts, but until that time, much of the so-called worship will be but a religious farce. It is not that "coffee and cake" will cause a change, but the church must show a more kindly spirit than it does. Especially is this true in the great cities where the strangers receive such cold treatment that they seek out the evil rather than the good (?). Young men who come from the country to the city, almost invariably find their way into the church, for in the country, they are given a welcome in the church, but ere long they grow weary of meeting the "icy stare," or often, not even a look, much less a welcome word, that they drift away and seek out a welcome elsewhere. Here is a sad truth : *The saloon keeper is far more cordial than the minister*, save in rare instances, while as for the membership of the fashionable church of to-day, there is absolutely no cordiality at all toward those outside their "set," and yet these dear souls make themselves believe that because they go through all the correct church forms and pay their part of the minister's salary and church expenses,

that there will be a harp and crown awaiting them later on. There may be, but the Good Book is either all wrong or there will be no Harp.

Again, that unkind spirit manifested by those of one creed toward all other churches must die away before permanent good can be done. Especially must "all creeds be forgot" before any real good is accomplished by the missionaries among the heathen. To them the preaching of many about One is most confusing, but never convincing as they think and feel that the One cannot be right if his followers differ so as to the right.

Some one says: "I prefer to go and come to and from a church without being spoken to—I prefer the 'cold formality,' as you term it." Of course, you recognize this "some one" as the man of "Self" "Self," who would not even share his life with another, lest he might be annoyed—and so goes and comes—through life alone—Alone for Self Self.

Had that been the spirit of Dr. Rainsford's church, it would not to-day have a membership of over 8,000—grown from the handfull, when the Doctor took charge. He has not only given a kindly welcome to all who come to his church, but he has gone out into the "lanes and by-ways," and brought in those whom the coldness of other churches had driven out or kept away.

It has been said that the rich and poor cannot worship together. That is too often true, but here is proof of what may be done. One of the richest men in the world—the man whose command will bring together more of the world's industries and interests than any other, is an active worker in St. George's—while of the 8,290 of the membership, but 589 live in private houses and 5,400 *exist* in tenements.

From what has here been done, the ministers throughout Canada, and all America, may see what may be done. Too many of them, aye, most of them,—of the great cities—think their duty is but to fill the pulpit and do the wishes of their rich and fashionable membership, giving no thought to those whom the “fashionable” of their congregation—by their coldness—would keep out.

Some day “All Creeds shall be forgot and in their stead reign Love !”





O EAT OR NOT TO EAT, THAT IS THE QUESTION.
WHETHER TIS NOBLER IN THE CHURCH TO SUFFER
THE BLINDS AND ARROWS OF SOME OUTRAGED DEACON,
OR GO BELOW AND EAT AND DRINK, AND
ROUND THE SEA OF COFFEED CAKE END ALL THY TROUBLES.

TO SPEAK OR NOT TO SPEAK, THAT IS THE QUESTION
TO BE A CHURCH AND WITH LONG DRAWN FACE,
GO FORTH INTO THE NIGHT, AND SPEE IN THYSELF,
OR GO BELOW WITH SMILING CHEEK TO GREET
THE STRANGER, WHO PERCHANCE THY WELCOME MAY AWAIT.



With Long-drawn face
Go forth into the
Night.

— J. H. P. —



O SING OR READ IS NOT TO CHURLS THE QUESTION,
THEY'D SING AND READ AYE FAR INTO THE NIGHT,
BUT ALL TO EAT AND DRINK, THEIR HANDS IN HERRER RAISE,
AND WITH SAD EYES TOWARD HEAVEN CAST,
WRAP ROUND THEIR MANTLES AND WITH HAUGHTY MIEN,
GOFORTH INTO THE DARKSOME NIGHT, OUTRAGED.



TO FREEZE OR NOT TO FREEZE, THAT IS THE QUESTION,
WHETHER T'IS NOBLER IN THE CHURCH TO WARM
AND HEARTEN UP THE STRANGER GUESTS,
OR BY THY RIGHTEOUS CHILL DRIVE FAR AWAY,
THESE WOULD BE GOOD ATTENDANTS ON THY CREED.





O EAT, TO DRINK, TO SPEAK, TO SING OR FREEZE.
TO MEET THE CHURL OR WELCOME HAND EXTEND,
ARE QUESTIONS ALL WITH VASTEST IMPORT FRAUGHT,
AND IN THEIR ANSWERS OERMUCH DEPENDS.



THE PURITANIC DAY HATH LONG SINCE GONE,
WHEN MEN WERE WON BY ICY HAND ABOVE,
WHILST PREACHER LIPS TOLD THEM OF WARMTH BELOW.
IT'S NOT SO MUCH A QUESTION NOW OF CREED,
TO MEET A WELCOME'S WHAT OUR CHURCHES NEED
ALL CREEDS ARE GOOD, IF GOOD THEY MAKE US BE,
ALL CREEDS ARE BAD THAT DRIVE WORLD-MEN A-YE.

"To smile a Welcome
is what our Churches
Need."





IS THE DOING NOT THE SAYING OF GOOD THINGS ALONE,
THE SAINTLY PRIEST PASSED BY WITH HEARTLESS Mien,
WHILST HE FROM LOW SAMARIA BOUND THE WOUNDS.



TO EAT OR NOT TO EAT, THAT'S NOT THE QUESTION,
THOUGH CHURLISH LEACON PROMM AND SWEAR,
AND SAY SUCH THINGS THE WORLDLY NEER HAD THOUGHT,
BOUT THEM WHO COOKIES MUNCH,
TO MUSIC FROM THE REED VALVES GROUND.
THEN EAT AND DRINK OF COFFEE, COOKIES TEA AND CAKE,
THOUGH DEACONS SWEAR, AND SAY HARSH THINGS OF THEE.
YEA DRINK AND DRINK OF AROMATIC BEAN,
IN SWEET DECEPTION BREWED,
AND YE SHALL NEER BY OTHER THAN THE CHURL
BE HELD TO AN ACCOUNTING.



The Saintly Priest
Passed by.....
Whilst he from low Samaria
Bound the Wounds.

Jo. F. Moulton



O SLEEP, TO DREAM; TO DREAM PERCHANCE
OF DAYS HARMONIOUS YET TO COME.
WHEN MEN SHALL LOVE THEIR FELLOW MEN
FAR MORE THAN MAN-MADE CREED:
WHEN ARMIES MELT, IN FLOATING MIST AWAY;
WHEN MOSQUE AND TEMPLE SHALL WITH CHURCH SPIRES BLEND;
WHEN JEW AND GENTILE SECT WITH SECT,
AS BROTHERS HAND IN HAND MARCH BY,
AND ALL THE WORLD SHALL LOVE.
AH THERES THE RUB, TO LOVE TO LIGHTEN AND TO CHEER,
TO SAY KIND THINGS, ESCHEWING ALL THE HARSH,
NOT SETTING UP ONE COLD WAY AS THE BEST.



OPHELIA COMES INTO THE CHURCH-YARD, READING A
BOOK ON HER WAY TO VESPERS.



H ME, MY DEAR OPHELIA, WHENCE COMEST THOU?
PRITHEE FAIR ONE, THY LOOKS ARE SAD;

"WHEREFORE AND WHY?"

THE WORLD'S ALL WRONG! THERE'S NAUGHT BUT POMP AND SHOW
EVEN IN THE CHURCH, THERE'S NAUGHT BUT CREED AND CREED.
THE HEARTS' GONE OUT AND FORM RATH'ER THEN ITS PLACE,
AND COLD HANDS GRASP, WHERE HANDS ARE GRASPED AT ALL."



HOW STRANGE THY SPEECH, THE SAME THOUGHT WAS MINE OWN,
SCARCE AS THOU CAME'ST WITHIN MY SIGHT BUT NOW.



THY WAYS ARE
HARSH
THE WRONG IS IN
THYSELF TODAY..



ND YET I AM NOT SAD, THO' SAD THE CASE MIGHT BE;
FOR HERE AND THERE, THROUGHOUT THIS AGE OF SNOW,
THERE COMES A CHANGE, BACK TO THE TIME OF HEART,
WHEN MEN DO LOVE THEIR FELLOWS ONCE AGAIN.
AND IN THIS LOVE ALL CREEDS SHALL BE FORGOT;
THE DARK BENIGHTED LANDS SHALL ALL BE WON,
BY BLENDED CREEDS JOINED IN ONE WHOLE FOR WORK.
AND IN THAT WORK WE'LL ALL BE MADE AS ONE "
"THINK YE THAT TIME SHALL EVER COME TO EARTH,
WITH ALL EARTH'S PEOPLES FIGHTING MORE FOR CREED THAN GOOD ?



NO, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE IT SO, E'EN COULD IT BE,
THEY LIEN AT FOR CREED, FOR CREED E'EN THO' THEY LOSE;
A' ... THE LOSING DRAG DOWN TO NETHER WORLDS
THE SOULS THEY FAIR WOULD SAVE -
TO SAVE, IF BY THEIR OWN SALVATION'S WAY.
"THY WAYS ARE HARSH, THE WRONG IS IN THYSELF TO-DAY.
WHAT BOOK IS THAT THOU HOLD'ST SO FIRMLY THERE?
AH ME IT IS A BOOK OF CREED, - THINE OWN I TROW -
AND YET SO READY WITH THY BLAME ON OTHERS CREED!
SO LIKE THE WORLD, THEIR OWN WAY IS THE BEST -
ALL ELSE IS WRONG, MOST GRIEVOUS WRONG, THE REST."



HAVE NO CREED, NO FORM OF RIGHT TO DO—
YET RIGHT TO DO. WILL EVER BE MY FORM.
AND IN ITS . . . NO NO MAN HIS RIGHT,
WHILST OFTEN THEY NO FOLLOW CLOSE A CREED,
GREAT WRONGS MAY DO AND FIND EXCUSE IN DOING.
BECAUSE THEY FOLLOW ALL THE FORMS OF CREED.
CAST FAR THY BOOK IF SAD IT MAKE THEE SEEM
AND THINK OF OTHERS ILL. IN THEIR OWN WAY,
THEN THOU WILT FIND, TO LOVE, TO HEARTEN AND TO CHEER—
TO SAY KIND THINGS. ESCHEWING ALL THE HARSH,
IS BEST OF ALL, AND IN ITS WAY, WIN BACK THE WORLD."